

CONCILIATION;

OR,

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

ORIGIN AND TERMINATION

OF THE

PRESENT WAR.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON MR. ERSKINE'S "VIEW OF THE CAUSES AND
CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRESENT WAR."

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BY HEWLING LUSON, OF SHEERNESS.

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THE
ECONOMICS OF THE
INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
BY
J. H. COHEN
CONTAINING
REMARKS ON THE
CONSEQUENCES OF THE
INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

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CONCILIATION,

&c.

AT this awful and momentous stage of a war, in which Britain has been upwards of four years engaged, and which has spread slaughter and desolation over Europe, and extended its baleful influence to the remotest regions of the globe, an investigation of the causes from whence it originated, or a solution of the question—"by whom was it begun?" can only be of utility or importance, by introducing among the belligerent powers such a salutary conviction of mutual errors, such a sincere and reciprocal spirit of *Conciliation*, as may promote the desirable and necessary conclusion of an equitable, permanent peace.

It has been the constant practice of hostile nations, at the commencement of a war, to fix on

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their

their opponents the charge of unprovoked or unjust aggression; though it frequently happens that this heavy guilt of thus wantonly engaging in war, and the awful responsibility for its inevitable and dreadful consequences, belong not exclusively to either.

But in all cases where the belligerent powers mutually resolve to refer their unacknowledged pretensions to the dreadful decision of arms, aggression, so far from being the cause of the war, is merely an effect originating from this previous determination.

There are many cases, as well in the transactions between different governments as in private life, so doubtful in themselves, and so liable to misrepresentation from the passions, the prejudices, and even the various opinions of mankind, that sincerity may not only be compatible with error, but frequently is a complete extenuation of criminality.

Some maxims, however, are so indubitably true, and so universally admitted, that a deviation from them is demonstratively erroneous and unjust; in all such cases a pretended belief in the rectitude of conduct resulting from opposite principles,

ciples, so far from extenuating, is an aggravation of the offence, since it is adding hypocrisy to conscious premeditated guilt.

No one will be hardy enough to deny the truth of the following proposition : “ That every independent nation has a right to adopt whatever form of government it thinks proper;” and consequently, “ that no one nation can have a right to impose on any other the government it may adopt for itself.”

It necessarily follows, that if the founders of the *sai-disant* republic of France, not content with maintaining, as a speculative opinion, that all other governments are usurpations on Liberty, Equality, and the Rights of Man, endeavoured to propagate this absurd and destructive position in the neighbouring nations, by clandestine attempts to render their governments hateful or contemptible to them, by open, avowed invitations to revolt, and by an explicit assurance that they would assist any nation dissatisfied with its present government, in effecting its emancipation from what they termed a state of ignominious slavery, they left no alternative to those nations, whose civil establishments they thus attempted to undermine, or subvert, but to *fraternize* or resist.

How far the above is a true or false representation of the principles and conduct of that faction which endeavoured to establish and perpetuate in France an oppressive, military oligarchy, under the specious name of a free democracy, at the close of the year 1792, will best appear by a retrospect of the revolution from which the constitution of 1789 originated.

This memorable revolution will be recorded in history, not only as the most remarkable occurrence in this eventful era, but in the annals of the world itself.

Stimulated to just resistance by a long, uninterrupted succession of tyranny, one of the greatest and most enlightened nations on earth nobly dared to rouse its gigantic, resistless strength, to break its ignominious fetters, to assert its freedom, and to demand its rights.

For this, the people of France merited, and for this they will doubtless obtain, the applause and admiration of succeeding ages.

But with the destruction of the Bastille, and the subversion of that tyrannic system which armed it with its terrors, the short-lived triumph of freedom

dom ends. It was not the altar of liberty, but of faction, that was erected on the ruins of this fortress of despotism.

No nation had ever a fairer opportunity to establish a free and permanent constitution; and there undoubtedly were, in the first constituent assembly, men of ability and virtue equal to the arduous task.

But the "still small voice" of reason and truth could not be heard amid the roar of contending factions, and the frantic orgies of a people intoxicated with the subtle passion of designing demagogues, who artfully taught them to believe that every social restriction was treason to the "Rights of Man"; that equality, not only of protection but of station, was essential to civil liberty; and, finally, that monarchy, divested of power, but loaded with responsibility, was to be retained just long enough to make it hated, ridiculed, and despised, and then to be ignominiously degraded, and wantonly destroyed, to make way for that perfect, immaculate phenomenon in government, a pure democracy of Jacobins, invested with supreme power, and subject to no controul but the superintending wisdom and sovereign voice of a Parisian mob!

Thus

Thus wickedly and fatally was the liberty of France sacrificed to a worthless faction; and a constitution, marked with strong, expressive traits of a divine origin, strangled at its birth.

The abused, insulted populace, goaded by their unprincipled apostate leaders, and accelerated by that impetuous volatility which is their national characteristic, pressed on in a headlong, furious course, rapidly passing the bounds of liberty, justice, and reason, and ignorantly pursuing "the reverse of wrong for right," till they reached the opposite extreme of social evil, more dreadful than despotism itself; they madly erected the standard of anarchy, the bloody signal for indiscriminate fury, slaughter, and devastation.

To mistake vengeance for justice, and retaliation of evil for redress, are too common yet fatal errors. In private life they are frequently succeeded by sufferings and deep remorse; and when nations are actuated by principles so erroneous and depraved, they seldom escape a severe retribution.

How awfully is this distributive justice exemplified by the late eventful history, and present dreadful state of France! Her monarchy dates its
fall

fall from its unjust interference in the war between Britain and America ; from its insidious endeavours to undermine a power it was too feeble to subvert.

The conquerors of the Bastille, elated with their victory, restrained by no principle of religion, justice, or humanity, and inflamed by the insatiable passions of avarice, ambition, and revenge, became, under the skilful management of their leaders, the instruments of a tyranny far more despotic and sanguinary than any that ever has been recorded in history ; and largely participated in the miseries they produced.

A punishment equally just, exemplary, and severe, awaited the factious demagogues themselves ; eagle-eyed in discovering, and indefatigable in adopting, the surest means to attain the object of their ambition, yet blind to the inevitable consequences that must ensue from a system so super-eminent in atrocity, they saw not that the guillotine, which had glutted their vengeance, gratified their avarice, and sustained their power, would fall with avenging justice on their devoted heads.

How

How exemplary is the admonition which the revolution in France affords to the surrounding governments and nations ! how strongly does it inculcate those divine truths, that a people who are destitute of religion, virtue, or humanity, cannot be free ; nor a government founded on atheism, terror, profligacy, and coercion, secure !

“ Dark, intricate,” and inscrutable as the ways of heaven appear to the circumscribed, dubious view of human reason ; strange as it may seem that the innocent should frequently suffer the punishment due to the guilty, that “ the people “ should bleed when their governors run mad ;” * yet the invariable, the inseparable connection between the probity and prosperity, the profligacy and decline, of nations and of empires, proves, beyond the possibility of a doubt, the moral agency—the over-ruling providence of God.

Had the court, the nobles, the national assembly, and the people of France, been actuated by principles of virtue, moderation, and mutual confidence, the constitution of 1789 might have been rendered at once respectable and permanent ; and Europe might have escaped the horrors of

* Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

this desolating war ; but the general depravity and insincerity, the contention of passions, interests, and prejudices, artfully inflamed and systematically directed by that ascendant faction, which soon after obtained for itself a local habitation and a name,* not only obscured the opening dawn of liberty in France, but involved the neighbouring nations in the deepening—still impending gloom of that wide-wasting storm their sanguinary ambition has raised.

Secure in the implicit obedience of the profligate, sanguinary populace of Paris, whom a similarity of disposition and desires attached to their interest, and a conscious inferiority of intellect subjected to their power, they wanted not, nor indeed could they possibly have obtained, an engine better calculated to insure their success.

Intimately acquainted with its latent springs, they could direct all its movements at pleasure, and accommodate it with equal facility to the varied scenes and incidents of their tragic drama. A spectacle, a tumult, or a massacre, they could produce with a wish, whenever it was their object to amuse, to intimidate, or to destroy.

* The Jacobins.

Even the enemies of the Jacobins must acknowledge, they were no less fertile in expedients than judicious in the use of them.

They knew that their comprehensive plan, which included not only the attainment of absolute power in France, but the subjugation or subversion of all the neighbouring governments, must expand by degrees, and might by a proper combination be so contrived, as to render the first of these designs subservient to the second.

Sensible that the constitution of 1789 had neither stability nor consistence to render it permanent, they were not only content, but gratified by the trial of so hopeless an experiment.

They therefore manifested an alacrity, no less prompt, than that of the real champions of liberty; and the blind deluded populace, in the solemn confederation of the 14th of July, in the Champ de Mars.

To these eminent legislators and philosophers, whose superior intellects, and convenient consciences, enable them to reject the idea of a *God*, and a future state, as vain chimeras of the vulgar multitude,

multitude, nothing could be more trivial than the obligations of an oath. How admirably then, was this national pageant in every respect adapted to the promotion of their views!

The regulated concourse of an innumerable multitude of all ages and conditions, annually assembled to confirm, by a solemn oath, the constitution, which was to secure to the whole French nation "liberty, equality, and the rights of man;" the enlivening and "spirit-stirring" sounds of vocal and instrumental music, celebrating in patriotic and martial hymns the praises and triumphs of freedom; occasionally interrupted by the roar of cannon, and the acclamations of enraptured millions; and the altar of liberty, decorated with its appropriate emblems and devices; formed altogether as grand and animating a pageant as it was possible for human art to exhibit, or even for imagination to conceive.

The abasement of royalty, which occupied an inferior station, and had a subordinate and humiliating part assigned it, in this august and imposing spectacle, was admirably calculated to heighten the stage effect, by abating the ancient national veneration and love of monarchy, and inspiring the astonished populace, who were at once spec-

tators and actors of the lofty scene, with high ideas of their own consequence and estimation.

In any country a spectacle so uncommon and so sublime, would have been deeply impressive; but in France it was fascinating; and raised a fervour of enthusiasm which the popular leaders took all imaginable care to maintain, by successive appeals to their passions. In the hall of the Jacobins, hung round with the chains, iron cages, and various engines of tyranny or torture, supposed to be taken from the ruins of the Bastille, the people saw at once the trophies of their conquest, and the incentives of their revenge. The destruction of the royal statues and emblems, and the abolition of all armorial and hereditary honours, admonished them that monarchy and nobility being at all times, *and in all countries*, usurpations on the rights of man, were fallen in France, never to rise again. The inscriptions of liberty and equality, which every where met the eye; the studied vulgarity of salutation and language; the shameless profligacy of manners, and the squalid meanness of attire, were the glorious triumphs of Sansculottism: the fulsome incense offered by hypocrisy to folly! The apotheosis of reason, personified by a female, of whom the famous Dr. Graham's goddess of health was probably the prototype,

prototype, was an admirable device to persuade the people that religion was no more than a bugbear and an imposition; and the *significant* inscription, which pointed out their cemeteries as "the realms of eternal sleep," was well calculated to silence the murmurs of conscience, to extinguish the feelings of humanity, and to banish the dread of retribution.

Nor was there less of policy, in the progressive systematic cruelty, with which the Jacobin faction treated the ill-fated Royal Family of France.

Conscious of the high veneration in which monarchy was held in France till the late sudden revolution, they could not be ignorant that it had still many strenuous adherents in the distant provinces, and perhaps even in the capital itself. It was no less evident that whatever acts of tyranny and oppression might, according to the despotic constitution of the French monarchy, have been committed under the sanction of his name, Louis XVI. so far from being himself a tyrant, was possessed of a disposition remarkably placid and humane. Their object therefore was, to make not only the monarchy itself, but the unhappy king, "who bore his faculties thus meekly," odious to the people before they ventured on

"The deep damnation of his taking off."

In the rapid reflux of popular opinion, nothing is more common than the transition from veneration to contempt.

History abounds in examples of this fluctuation, the cause of which is coeval with human nature, and results from its imperfections and perverseness, always varying in its unstable judgment to opposite extremes, and unreasonably depreciating what it has fondly over valued.

The malignant, sanguinary faction, saw that this, as well as every other defect or vice incident to the nature of man, might be made subservient to their designs; and it would be unjust to their penetration and genius to deny their skill in the application of the vilest principles to the most iniquitous purposes.

To enter into a circumstantial detail of events so recent would be superfluous; since it is the sole object of this essay to conciliate, not to inflame, the unreasonable and most impolitic animosity that now, too fatally for France and Britain, exerts its exterminating influence in this indecisive war—

To

To prove that it is the reciprocal interest of both these nations, that it is equally the duty of both their governments, to terminate the destructive contest, not only by a just and honourable peace, founded on reciprocal concession, forbearance, and oblivion of ancient enmity and present injury, but (however incongruous the idea may at first sight appear) by a sincere, permanent ALLIANCE.

No measure short of this can *secure* the repose of Europe. The *absurd*, the horrid idea of natural enmity between Britain and France, must either be eternally extinguished, or its smothered embers will soon again burst forth in dreadful conflagration.

But this amity, which cannot be sincere without a reciprocal renunciation of ambition, abasement of pride, and, in short, without a total dereliction of the opinions, a total revolution in the principles by which England and France have for many centuries been governed, can only proceed from that most difficult of all human exertions, A MUTUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ERROR.*

* This subject is more fully discussed in the Second Section.

Possibly

Possibly this is too much for any one who is not a philosopher, a maniac, or an idiot, to expect. It is at least totally different from the *wise* policy of the most sagacious cabinets, and the most celebrated ministers, that the present or any other century since the Christian æra, or even the annals of the world itself can produce.

This, it must be acknowledged, is a melancholy truth; but let any man of common sense, reflection, and humanity, look back but to the commencement of the present century, and he must deeply lament the dreadful consequences of these sagacious counsels. Nay, let him look back no farther than the last nine years, let him attentively contemplate the prospect of Europe at the present awful moment, and surely, if not lost to sensibility, he will start with horror as from a frightful dream; and when he views the bloody triumphs of Britain, of Austria, and of France, and the impending ruin of them all, he will indignantly exclaim, *is this the age of reason?*

But returning from this digression, and resuming the subject which gave rise to it, the reader will easily perceive the adroitness with which the Jacobins availed themselves of the errors of their
opponents,

opponents, the prejudices of their adherents, and the weakness of human nature itself, to promote their sanguinary and ambitious designs.

The attempt made by the King and Queen to fly from premeditated destruction, their intercession and most degrading return to Paris, were events as favourable to the views of their enemies as they could possibly desire. Every concurrent circumstance attending this unfortunate attempt, which was almost at the moment of its completion frustrated, more by the indolence and humanity of the King, than by the activity or vigilance of his pursuers, tended still more to degrade him in the public opinion. Nothing was more easy than to inflame the minds of the populace, by representing this measure in the blackest colours; they required no evidence to convince them that it was a direct violation of the constitution Louis had sworn to maintain; and a plan, preconcerted between him and the enemies of that constitution, to reinstate him in the plenitude of his former despotic power.

Bold assertion, totally unsupported by proof, was sufficient to establish, in the prejudiced minds of the enraged multitude, the certainty of the king's duplicity in this transaction; though the

ignominious manner in which he was brought back to the Thuilleries, clearly demonstrates that he was regarded by his unfeeling conductors, and their unprincipled employers, as a prisoner returned to his jail.

That captivity was the state of the unhappy King and Queen, from the day of their entrance into Paris to that of their murder on the scaffold, cannot admit of a doubt; and it is equally true that, during the long and melancholy period of its continuance, they suffered a complication of indignities as degrading, and miseries as severe, as the most refined, ingenious malignity could invent, or the most hardened, unrelenting cruelty could inflict.

These unexampled trials the royal sufferers sustained with a dignified, calm, collected fortitude, which they never would have been thought to have possessed, had it not been for the very extraordinary events which called forth their latent virtues into action.

The treatment they experienced from the Jacobins on their return to captivity, nearly resembled that which a culprit, condemned to die, and striving to save his devoted life by eluding the vigilance

lance of his keepers, would receive from their liberality on being reconducted to jail. The weight of his fetters must be encreased to prevent force, the number of his guards must be augmented to counteract stratagem; the very small catalogue of a prisoner's comforts must be abridged, to punish the heinous offence of seeking self-preservation.

The humanity of the faction doubtless felt a severe shock when obliged, by a severity no less coercive, to restrain the violence, to countermine the fraud, and to punish the guilt of their royal prisoners; but their sacred love of liberty, their veneration for the constitution they had sworn to maintain, and their delicate scrupulosity in the observance of so solemn and conscientious an obligation as an oath, were motives too potent even for the love of money implanted in their benevolent hearts to combat; a sense of duty therefore prevailed over the weakness of their nature.

———" Mercy left her throne,

" And justice sternly took her place to govern."

TAMERLANE.

No lenity was, in future, to be shewn to the royal criminals, who had presumed to take a

clandestine flight from the blessed abode of
 "liberty, equality, and the rights of man!"

It was not sufficient that they were precluded from the possibility of escape, and surrounded by a furious multitude, thirsting for their blood; thousands of their faithful adherents and gallant defenders must be massacred before their eyes, ere they were permitted to close them for ever; and 20,000 chosen champions of liberty were invited to the capital, that they might share the glories and the triumphs of the brave Parisian sans culottes. The decree had passed the national assembly, and the King was required to give it his assent. Had they enjoined him to sign the death warrant of himself and family, they might with equal reason and justice have expected his compliance; but to the Jacobin faction his acquiescence or refusal was of little moment, since the former would render him despicable in the opinion of the people at large, and the latter would expose him to the vengeance of the Parisian mob.

This, however, he had the fortitude to prefer, and, with a firmness which he was not suspected to possess, exercised the power vested in him by the constitution of refusing his assent to the decree.

This decided opposition to a measure, calculated not only for his own destruction, but for the subversion of the constitution itself, was represented by the Jacobins, and regarded by the populace, as an audacious avowal of tyranny, and wound up their minds to that decree of enthusiastic ferocity necessary for the sanguinary work their despots had destined them to perform.

By an ingenious refinement in the art of tormenting, which might probably have exceeded the sagacity of a Nero, a Caligula, or a Maximin, these adepts in the science contrived

“ To feed destruction with a lingering act.”

and to fill the intermediate busy scenes with a wonderful variety of distress.

On the 20th of June 1792, a tumultuous rabble, whose only object in demanding, or rather in forcing admittance to the royal victims, were skilfully instructed to awaken terror by alarm, to embitter insult with contumely, and to sharpen contempt by derision; a proficiency so unrivalled in the science of torture, reflects the highest degree of credit on the ingenuity and discernment, if not on the humanity of their employers. How degrading to human nature were the motley scenes of distress, mirth, and rage, exhibited that day
at

at the Thuilleries. Yet how clearly did this demonstrate the frivolity, as well as ferocity of a rabble, who could thus associate ridicule with barbarity, and extract pleasure from the wanton and ludicrous persecution of misery.

This full gratification of these extraordinary propensities was undoubtedly a judicious preparation of the actors for the tragedies they were to perform on the 10th of August and 2d of September, in the same year.

But, as it is by no means necessary, it certainly cannot be desirable, to obtrude on the averted eyes of the public, scenes so abhorrent to humanity, so disgraceful to the age and nation in which they were exhibited.

The only intention of the writer in this review of the leading events in France, from the destruction of the Bastille to the subversion of the constitution of 1789, is to prove, that they evidently resulted from the regular developement of a plan, most artfully arranged, and successfully executed, by the Jacobin, or (as it is commonly called) the republican faction, to establish for *themselves* a despotic tyranny in France, and to extend it through-

throughout Europe, under the specious names of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Hypocrisy and enthusiasm are no less inimical to liberty than to religion; and the danger which civil society has to fear from the influence of political imposition, though at all times greater than any to be apprehended from pious fraud, were never more justly to be dreaded than at the present alarming crisis.

The intolerant persecuting spirit of religious bigotry exists no longer, and the enthusiasm of the present day is not merely harmless, it is highly beneficial. It restrains the vicious, and promotes the virtuous propensities and habits of the lower orders of the community; it inculcates on their minds the necessity of submitting to that social subordination, without which society cannot exist.

Such, at least, are the principles of those sectaries in Britain who are denominated enthusiasts. The ministers of the established church itself are not more constant, nor more urgent, than the preachers of methodism, in admonishing their hearers to yield willing obedience and steady support to that mild and equitable system of laws, which

which secures to them their liberty, their property, and their lives.

They return their sincere and grateful thanks to heaven, that they are subjects of a government which repays obedience with protection; which will insure to *Britons*, while it exists unimpaired, the greatest measure of EQUALITY the existence of civil society will admit; which guaranties to every rank in the community the SOCIAL RIGHTS OF MAN.

How opposite, how dreadful, are the effects of hypocrisy operating on political enthusiasm in France!

The apostles of "liberty, equality, fraternity, and the rights of man," are numerous, and "by their fruits ye shall know them."

To deny, that among the founders of this new sect, and even among its present leaders, there are men of superior abilities would be no less absurd than to suppose the vigour of their mental powers were impaired, or the exercise of them restrained, by the unwelcome intrusion of religion, conscience, virtue, or humanity.

But

But their inferior agents, their missionaries for the propagation of their "glad tidings," neither profess nor want any superior degree of natural or acquired knowledge.

The essential requisites for a mob-orator are by no means difficult to be found in men of common abilities; real or simulated enthusiasm, vehement gesture, and fluency of elocution, strength of lungs, coarse, vulgar abuse, and unmeaning bombast, are fully sufficient.

Orators of this "common mould" abounded in France at the commencement of the revolution, and their speeches, not only in the National Assembly, but in all places of public resort, contributed probably much more to the abolition of the hierarchy and nobility, and the consequent destruction of the royal family, of monarchy itself, and of the constitution of 1789, than the most elaborate writings of their justly celebrated philosophers could have done.

The inflated harangues in the national and constituent assemblies, were exactly level to the capacities, and well-calculated to inflame the passions of the mob within doors and without. The fans culotte orators, whose speeches were

most violent, were sure to receive the gratulation of the Mountain and the gallery. Many of them, it must be confessed, were no mean proficient in the rapid, vehement oratory, so impressive on the minds of vulgar auditors. That some of them possessed, in an eminent degree,

“ Action and utterance, and the power of words,

“ To stir men’s minds to mutiny and rage,”

has been fatally proved by the sanguinary fury which they inspired into the deluded multitude, and the atrocious deeds which were in consequence committed on the 10th of August and 2d of September, 1792. At this dreadful period the constitution of 1789 was subverted, the King and his unhappy family were imprisoned, and despotism fixed her bloody throne in the hall of the Jacobins; this tyrannic faction governed the populace; the populace, under their direction, kept the national assembly in a state of abject fear and implicit obedience; and such were the delegates of the French nation, who sanctioned the murder of Louis XVI. and formed the constitution of 1792.*

This

* The following anecdote, from Miss W. M. Williams’s Letters, will illustrate at once the insolent pretensions of the mob, and the abject state of the national assembly.—A member being ill treated in his passage to the house, asked the

This constitution, founded on perjury, rapine, and murder, could recur to no better expedients for its maintenance and support. Terror therefore became "the order of the day;" the guillotine, "the minister of finance;" and the possession of property, the harbinger of death. The tyranny, the ambition, the avarice, and the barbarity of the Jacobins were insatiable; and "fraternity" was to effect for them in *other* countries what "liberty and equality" had done in their own; it was even to do more; for at the same time that it afforded ample gratification for their inordinate appetites, it gave a temporary stability to their government, which they could not by any other means have obtained, and diverted the popular enthusiasm to objects most favourable to their designs.

They were well aware that the origin of their power might in a very short time become its destruction; and that a revolution would easily destroy the fragile fabric of insurrection. Of this they were in continual dread; some whole provinces were in an actual state of rebellion, and others

the surrounding rabble how they dare insult a representative of the people?—one of them replied, "You are, it is true, the representative of the people; but we are your sovereign, for we are the people."

were by no means unanimous in supporting their usurpation. The most staunch enemies of monarchy saw with jealous indignation the monopolizing influence of the capital, the unrivalled ascendancy of the Jacobins, and the enterprising ambition of Robespierre.—A crusade for the propagation of “liberty, equality, and fraternity” to the neighbouring nations, and to Britain among the first, where emissaries had long been secretly and (as they had reason to think) successfully employed, was the most effectual measure they could adopt. It was unquestionably the duty of a free Republic to dispense to the surrounding nations the *blessings* of “liberty and equality.” Monarchy, in whatever form, was an usurpation on the rights of man.—The governments of Europe were *all* despotic and corrupt—Kings were “crowned ruffians,” who ought to be indiscriminately destroyed; “ *to be born to royalty was itself a crime deserving death* ,” with many other absurdities of a similar kind, were continually repeated by the Jacobins, and excited the most enthusiastic ardour in the deluded and deeply injured people. Thus they were sent forth by millions to spread

• These expressions, with many no less inflammatory and ridiculous, were frequently made use of by the orators most celebrated in the national assembly at the latter end of the year 1792.

slaughter

slaughter and desolation through the extensive range of their destructive course; to drench their own fertile provinces with kindred blood, and to leave their country a prey to the transcendent atrocity of the most ruthless tyrants that ever scourged mankind. But have not the people of France, it may be asked, an undoubted right to choose whatever form of government they thought fit, without consulting the neighbouring powers?

Most certainly they have, provided the constitution they adopt does not interfere with the internal government, or with the rights of other nations. No other state is authorized by the law of nations to question the right of the people of France to destroy their ancient despotic monarchy. They had an equal right to form the constitution of 1789—an equal right (so far as it concerns all other nations) to destroy in 1792, the constitution they had solemnly sworn on each anniversary of its formation to maintain—an equal right (if it seemed good to them) to appoint delegates and hold their national assembly at Paris—an equal right to suffer that assembly to be overawed and governed by a lawless banditti, the *soi-disant* sovereign power of the people, though, in fact, the servile instruments of a faction—an equal right to give the sanction of their tacit or implied assent

assent of every act of rapine and murder committed in their name—an equal right to celebrate the anniversary of the infamous murder of their king as a triumphal festival—to convert the church of Notre Dame into a temple of reason—to establish atheism—to canonize Marat and Robespierre—to make the 10th of August, and 2d of September, 1792, *red* letter days in the Sans Culotte Calendar—in fine, they had, and still have, an unquestionable right to establish and perpetuate in France that system of “liberty and equality,” which they now possess—because, however unjust, immoral, inhuman, or absurd their conduct in these, and various other instances may be, one independent nation is not accountable to another for the administration or establishment of its internal government.

But when France, not content with forming a constitution for herself, added “*fraternity*” to “liberty and equality,” she violated the rights of every nation with whose internal government she thus presumed to interfere. To repel invasion is a right founded on the immutable laws of nature and justice; and even to make reprisals, (though not so clearly deducible from these pure sources), is admitted as a right by the law of nations; for this reason; that nations being independent of each

each other, and there not being, as in separate societies, any court of law in which the injured party can seek redress and punish those who do the wrong, they must vindicate their rights by force of arms, and attack the unjust aggressor where he is most vulnerable. Happy would it be for mankind, if it were possible for our nature to be so far meliorated, and our passions so much under the command of philosophy, as to allow of the establishment of such a court of equity, among the civilized nations in the world, as might supersede the dire necessity of *war*, and its concomitant horrors and crimes.

Millions of human beings, strangers to each other, and much more inclined by nature to be friends than enemies, would not then be conveyed over land and ocean with peril, hardship, and disease for their constant attendants, and with the improvident ruinous expense to their different nations, for no other purpose than to destroy each other, that they may gratify the pride, avarice, or revenge of those, who, perhaps, deride alike their sufferings, and their folly!—Such, however, is the present imperfect state of human affairs; and according to the absurd and sanguinary system, by which the conduct of the most civilized nations toward each other is regulated, France was justified, not
only

only in opposing the aggression of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, but in attempting to carry the war into their own territories.

Thus an ambition more inordinate, a thirst for power and conquest more insatiable, a despotism more humiliating, more dangerous, and more intolerable than even that of Louis XIV. assumed the appearance of justice; and the people were at once inflamed by vindictive fury and enthusiastic zeal.

Of a despotism, and sentiments so favourable to their views, the Jacobins were not slow to avail themselves; daily experience convincing them that no achievement is too daring, no conquest too hard, for those who possess the consummate art to blind the reason, and inflame the passions of the mind; to direct the resistless operations of that passive slave of prejudice and opinion; yet powerful agents in all political transactions, the will of the multitude.—This is the mighty engine which the despotic rulers of France have, from the commencement of the memorable revolution, but too successfully employed, in promoting their most daring, most iniquitous, and, to those who do not consider the force of their *moving power*, most improbable designs.

The

The destruction of the Bastile, of the nobility, of the monarchy, of religion, of all social subordination, and of every moral principle, was not merely a revolution circumscribed by the boundaries of France: it was a total revolution in the opinions, the manners, and the customs of a great and populous nation; its influence is pervading, progressive, and resiftless; but its vital principle, which is no other than the unaccountable mutability of the human mind, is unsubstantial, and fleeting, as

“ —the baseless fabric of a vision.”

The Jacobins, exalted by this capricious power to the summit of their wishes, were confident that fraternity would gain for them in other nations equal advantages to those which liberty and equality had procured for them in France; and that their united influence would extend their conquests and their power far beyond the widest limits to which the ambition of a single despot ever presumed to aspire.

The war which we are most unhappily obliged to continue is a war of principles: not a war of the French Republic with the coalesced powers, but of “liberty, equality, fraternity, and the

rights of man" (as defined by the Jacobins) with every form of government, and every system of religion established on earth.—On the part of France it is *bellum ad internecionem*; on that of the confederated powers, it is a war not merely of self defence, but of self preservation.

To every country which has a government worth defending, a religion worth preserving, a war with the constitution of France of the year 1792, was not a question of expediency, policy, or justice, but of evident, inevitable necessity. Nor could the coercive force of this necessity be more powerfully impressive on any country than on Britain, since no other country possessed so excellent a constitution of government, united with so rational an establishment, or so ample a toleration of religion. The war which is unavoidable cannot be unjust; and to those who are convinced no alternative was left for Britain, but to resign its government, its liberty, its property, or to maintain these inestimable privileges by force of arms, the justice of the war cannot be a matter of doubt; however sincerely every friend to his country, and to the human race, must lament its dire necessity.

It is not with France as a nation that Britain is now at war; and happy would it have been for both countries, had not petulance, arrogance, ambition, or a weak impolitic acquiescence with popular prejudice and resentment, plunged them into * three wars equally ruinous to themselves, and destructive to mankind, for objects so unimportant as to be nearly ridiculous. Far different are the causes and objects of the present momentous contest, in which the question at issue is no less than the maintenance or disorganization of civil society. The subversion of the existing governments was the avowed object, the animating principle of that military despotism which the governing faction in France thought proper to call the constitution of 1792. Pure democracies, of a similar construction, were to be universally established—monarchy under any form was declared to be tyranny—a violation of the imprescriptible rights of man; hereditary honours and titles were impositions no less ridiculous than intolerable—and the possession of private property

* The Spanish war of 1738, in which France engaged first as an ally, and afterwards as a principal, originated in the loss of Capt. Jenkins's ear.—The war of 1756, was, as Mr. Voltaire pointedly remarks, "a quarrel for a few acres of snow in Canada:"—and the American war took its rise from a litigated tax of 1s. 6d. per lb. on tea.

was inconsistent with liberty and equality. "These
 " (said the Jacobins) are the only true principles
 " of government; and these it is our duty, our
 " interest, and our determination, not only to
 " maintain, but to disseminate. We have not
 " the most distant idea of *conquest*; it is not for
 " this our triumphant banners are displayed in
 " Belgium, in Holland, in Germany, and in
 " Italy; it is not with the oppressed people of
 " these countries we are at war; they are our
 " brethren; we therefore invite *them* to fraternize
 " with us, and, like us, to extirpate the tyrants
 " and the tyranny they have too long groaned
 " under."

Democratic tyranny thus erected a tottering throne on the ancient, but unstable, foundation of force and fraud.* Invigorated by the additional support it derived from a spirit of popular enthusiasm, more ardent, and far more universal,

* Democratic tyranny always seeks support from popular delusion, united with military force, as monarchical despotism does from the union of the same force with ancient custom or prerogative.

Of the former tyranny, and of its *feeble* duration the histories of Greece and Rome (and of England during the last century) afford remarkable examples.

than

than religious fanaticism ever excited; it grasped its iron sceptre, eager to exercise that supreme command, to establish that dictatorial ascendancy over Europe, which have always been the darling objects of France, and which her hypocritical demagogues not only taught her to believe, but might probably be vain enough themselves to imagine, she would assuredly acquire and retain,

The all-wise Governor of the universe is continually producing good from evil: sometimes counteracting the most deep laid plans of human iniquity by the intervention of causes equally unforeseen and irresistible; and frequently converting the most malignant, cruel, and sordid passions in the heart of man to the service of opposite virtues.

Thus the reciprocal miseries of this desolating war may, when the dreadful storm is past, excite in the breasts of those who now meet only to destroy, those sentiments of philanthropy which are congenial to our nature.—The rant of pretended zealots, who in secret deride the patriotism they profess, whose sole aim is to violate those rights, to destroy that freedom they pretend to revere, may prove essentially beneficial to the liberties of mankind,

The

The indiscriminate fury of Jacobin fanaticism, which confounds monarchy with tyranny, and assails alike the benefactors and the plunderers of nations, as it has awakened, may perpetuate, popular resentment against ambition, rapine, and despotism, under whatever form they may appear.

To future ages, perhaps even to this, the revolution itself, dreadful as are its present effects, menacing as its aspect now appears, may be productive of inestimable benefits. It may accelerate and extend the progress of liberty, philosophy, and civilization; it may inform, correct, and harmonize mankind.

Already its meliorating influence produces great and visible alterations in our conduct as well as in our opinions. Superstition drops its mask, and persecution its scourge; pride, terrified and abased, relaxes its haughty brow; rank, birth, and title, are appreciated by the standard of reason; and the fortuitous occupier of these necessary appendages to civil society must no longer claim from others that respect for his station which he neglects to pay it himself; he must also bear in mind, that the most dangerous and the worst of levellers in society are those who degrade the station to which fortune has raised them;

them; who lower the eminence on which they erect the standard of their pride; and abet the cause of that equality they affect to depreciate and despise, making the necessity of subordination grievous, and submission to vice, arrogance, and folly, disgraceful.

How pointed, yet how just, is the contempt with which reason and philosophy now regard the famed exploits, the rapine, the murders, the insatiable pride and ambition of that "crowned ruffian" of antiquity, Alexander the Great! They may now give a bold and decisive answer in the affirmative to the question of the humane, indignant poet,

"And shall not twice a thousand years unpraise

"The boisterous boy, and blast his guilty bays?"

Dr. YOUNG's *Love of Fame*.

His valour, his occasional magnanimity, his noble confidence, may still be admired; but his excesses, his pride, and his tyranny, will, in this enlightened age, meet with the detestation they deserve.

How despicable, how fordid, how abject, does the sanguinary ambition of Louis XIV. appear!

How

How does it shrink from the mortifying comparison with the invincible Grecian Hero !

No sprig of laurel graced the brow—no genius informed—no virtue irradiated the mind of the gloomy ferocious bigot.

The haughty unrelenting despot compelled armies of slaves to sacrifice their lives in the unjust and unavailing attempt to swell his triumphs, and extend his sway. Rioting in luxury and debauchery, or chanting, with impious hypocrisy, Te Deums for battles he dared not fight, and for victories he did not obtain, he saw Europe's fertile plains desolated and drenched with blood at his command ; while the indignant, agonizing, awful groan of suffering millions ascended to heaven, to call down vengeance on his guilty head.

Nor was the tremendous appeal preferred in vain ; baffled, abased, and vanquished, enraged by disappointment, and afflicted with an incurable disease, the wretched Louis closed a life of infamy with anguish, remorse, and dismay.

" Ill weared ambition, how much art thou shrunk !

" Are all the trophies, glories, triumphs, toils,

" Sunk to this little measure ?"

SHAKESPEARE.

The

The open, daring arrogance of regal tyranny, armed for plunder and devastation, however odious and revolting to reason and humanity, dazzles by its terrific splendor. The stern, majestic, intrepid hero, scorning disguise,

“Assumes the port of Mars, and at his heels,

“Leash’d in like hounds, see Famine, Sword, and Fire,

“Crouch for employment.”

SHAKESPEARE.

Not so the mean, plebeian, *sans culotte* tyranny, of Jacobin extraction. It takes a secret, treacherous, “serpent course;” like the fabled Proteus, borrows the form most suited to its purpose, and thinks none too vile that can gratify its ambition, satiate its avarice, or glut its vengeance. Sometimes it apes the sly, insidious hypocrite, preaching to the gaping multitude the new political revelation of liberty, equality, and the “rights of man;” while “the slow and moving finger” of derision points indignantly at the supercilious aristocrat, the lazy, pampered prelate, the rich, luxurious merchant; then turns significantly to their palaces, their churches, and their wealth; extols the wisdom and the justice of Agrarian laws: the righteousness of blessed “equality,” rouses the sportsmen, fires the hungry

G

pack,

pack, and hunts the ill-fated victims to the toils of their destroyers.

The varying monster, through every changing form retaining his innate depravity, now, perhaps, appears the zealous champion of his country's cause, and injured freedom's rights, ascends the tribune, echos the hollow murmurs of the dreadful "Mountain,"

" Bellows out for Rome and for his country,

" And mouths at Cæsar till he shakes the Senate."

ADDISON.

Again he quits his fleeting form, and heads, perhaps, the furious hordes of frantic republicans, deaf to the voice of suffering humanity, and eager to spread terror and destruction through their native land.

The mother's piercing shriek, the infant's feeble cry, awake no pity in the tyrant's breast; his command is gone forth—all royalists must die—whole provinces must be depopulated—and desolation must be accounted victory.*

* Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem vocant.

Such were the bloody triumphs of the hero of La Vendée, the bold, vaunting invader of Ireland.

Sated

Sated for a while with slaughter, he becomes the director of festivals and orations—the composer of martial airs, and “pious orgies,” in honour of “*his gods*,”—the arbiter of taste and fashion—the sage philosopher, legislator, and chronologer, destined to enlighten and emancipate a stupid, slavish world—to eradicate the ancient hereditary, vulgar errors, of chastity, virtue, and morality; and to extinguish the very name and memory of Christianity.*

Again the direful tocsin sounds—the affrighted capital re-echos the roar of cannon—the shrieks of death, and the shouts of triumphant, frantic rage! The *many-headed* monster now assumes its *native shape*, ascends its sanguine throne,

“Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.”

Prodigal of blood, it has even been known some times to deviate into the path of justice, and shed its own. The heads of tyrants have passed in quick succession under its guillotine, while the deathless hydra has still survived, and gained new vigour from its bleeding wounds.

* The *deification* of reason, and even of mortals!—the laws of divorce—and the new calendar, were most undoubtedly instituted for these purposes.

+ which was the Calendar

Vain and endless would be the pursuit of this illusive Proteus, through its various evanescent forms; but the most important change, that which, while it confirmed his domestic tyranny, extended his foreign conquests, was the metamorphosis into that sleek, base, cringing, cruel hypocrite, which calls itself FRATERNITY—which deceives the surrounding nations with the semblance of liberty, and the chimera of equality—that cowardly assassin, which

“ * Hugs while it stabs, and smiles while it devours.”

If this is a just estimate, and if it portrays a faithful representation of the principles and conduct of the faction which governed France, from the deposition of the King, and the subversion of the constitution of 1789, till the end of the year 1793; and which, even till the establishment of the present constitution, exhibited very equivocal symptoms of amendment; it will not, be very difficult to accomplish the objects of this discussion, which are,

1st, To exculpate the British government and nation from the foul imputation of unjustly provoking a war, into which they were reluctantly compelled to engage.

* Hugging and kissing have frequently preceded assassination.

2dly,

2dly, To point out the impolicy of receiving M. Chauvelin as ambassador from the republic of France, in the beginning of the year 1793; and to vindicate the sincerity of administration in the late negotiation for peace.

3dly, To recommend the immediate termination of this destructive war by a general peace, on the basis of compensation, which has been admitted by the governments of France and Britain to be just, and to render this peace permanent and secure by a firm alliance between the French and British nations and governments.

These articles will be separately considered in the following section.

END OF SECTION THE FIRST.

SEC.

SECTION SECOND.

THE heavy charge, that the British government precipitated this country into an unjust and unnecessary war with France, though repeatedly urged, not only by the anarchists of that nation, and the instigators of sedition and revolution in this, but by many elevated in station, respectable for integrity, and eminent in ability, has never been substantiated by evidence, nor corroborated by arguments, which will bear the test of impartial discussion.

It was not against France, as a nation, nor even against the Jacobins, unjustly exercising an usurped power in that nation, that the British government took up arms.

The tyranny of these democratic impostors might have excited our abhorrence; the miseries of their victims must have claimed our compassion; and the blind credulity of their adherents might have raised our wonder: but the crimes committed, and the calamities endured
by

by France, could not have justified our interference, if their consequences had not extended to ourselves.

It is not because their government is oppressive, and their governors tyrannical, but because the principles upon which that government is founded are incompatible with the existence of our own, that we are at war with them.

It is not on our part a war of aggression, but of self defence; a war which no expedient could have prevented, which absolutely precluded any possibility of compromise, while those principles were explicitly avowed, and systematically reduced to practice.

Long before the death of Louis XVI. the Jacobin faction had insidiously attempted to undermine a constitution of government, which, when they obtained the full possession of unlimited power, they openly declared it was their intention to subvert.

Our excellent constitution was at once an object of envy, hatred, and fear, to this proud, monopolizing, ambitious oligarchy.

They

They envied the wealth, they hated the liberty, they feared the power which Britain derived from this constitution; and, justly considering, that, while the British government possessed the confidence of the people, it would oppose an insuperable obstacle to their long projected scheme of universal empire, they omitted no means which fraud could suggest, treachery could execute, or chance might offer, to weaken a confidence, and divide a force, with which they were unable, when united, to contend.

Fortune on this occasion seemed most propitious to their desires, by supplying, without even an effort, on their part, of genius or invention, the most apt means for instilling into the minds of the populace their disorganizing, levelling principles of equality; their insidious offers of revolutionary fraternity; and furnished them, at the same time, with the most convenient vehicle; and the most plausible pretexts, for disseminating their fallacious and most pernicious doctrines through the different provinces of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Corresponding societies had been established in London, and in different parts of Great Britain, for the purpose of procuring, by such just and legal means as the constitution not merely allowed, but appeared to many

among

among the most respectable characters, both in and out of Parliament, strictly to enjoin a radical reform in the vitiated and inadequate representation of the people in the House of Commons.

They looked on this as an evil which “ had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished.”

It could not possibly have been foreseen, or even conjectured, at the time these real friends to liberty and the British constitution instituted the corresponding societies for parliamentary reform, that they would become the most dangerous engines of hostility to that constitution, of destruction to that liberty, they were constructed to defend. Still less probable was it that the mighty powers of this engine should be usurped, augmented, and directed by the most subtle, indefatigable, and inveterate enemy the English nation ever had cause to fear.

Yet all these most extraordinary events we have lived to witness.

We have seen numerous corresponding societies, instituted, as they pretend, for the purpose of promoting parliamentary reform, under the immedi-

ate influence of the Jacobin faction in France, or of British subjects equally desperate and unprincipled, and, if possible, still more criminal.

We have seen them most disgracefully and servily ape the absurd appellations, the brutal manners, and the disgusting cant of their employers, and, under the mask of liberty and equality, attempting to betray the unsuspecting populace into sedition, insurrection, and rebellion.

The presidents and orators of these "political brothels" wanted neither natural abilities nor legal information. They knew how far they might proceed to provoke prosecution, and where they must stop to escape conviction; it even seemed as if every new trial, while it improved their knowledge by experience, subtracted from that of their opponents; as if each recent accusation was to increase the triumph of faction and the discomfiture of government, by an additional acquittal.

Those who ascribe these acquittals to the mistaken lenity or wilful partiality of the jurors, and lament the injury which the constitution has sustained by them, appear, in both these opinions, to be greatly mistaken.

It

It was evidently clear, from the event of the first trial, and the astonishing display of ability, eloquence, and legal information, which it called forth on both sides of the question, that the prisoners, though acquitted of treason, were indebted much more to their prosecutors than to the jury for their discharge.

Had the subsequent charges been lighter, they would probably have ended in conviction and condign punishment; and the weight of the accusation, or of the punishment, would not have preponderated that of the crime.

Yet, notwithstanding the prisoners who were acquitted had reason to congratulate themselves on their fortunate escape, and their employers were gratified with an imaginary victory, the event of these trials was not only a cause of triumph to the friends of that palladium of our constitution, *trial by juries*, but to government itself; for the body of evidence adduced at these trials clearly demonstrating the *intimate* connection and *close correspondence* that subsisted between the corresponding societies and the ruling faction in France, excited, among all ranks and degrees of people in the three kingdoms, a spirit of zeal for the British constitution so ardent, and an ab-

horrence of the treacherous designs of its foreign and domestic enemies so general, and so just, as to produce, early in the year 1793, counter-associations sufficiently numerous, respectable, and loyal, to arrest in its full career the dangerous progress of insurrection.*

There

* If these corresponding societies, formed on the model of those respectable associations for the purpose of effecting, by constitutional measures, a reform in the representation of the people, really intended nothing more, why did they take so active and decided a part in the internal affairs of France, as to correspond with the most inveterate enemies of all monarchical forms of government?

Why did they, on all occasions of their meeting, applaud the principles, adopt the practice, and congratulate the success, of the republicans and levellers of France? Why did they even vote them money, and assure them of their zealous attachment and concurrence?

Why did these societies, instituted, as they pretended, for the sole purpose of promoting, by legal measures, a parliamentary reform, circulate with such unwearied assiduity, and such ample dissemination of its levelling and pernicious principles, Mr. Paine's "Rights of Man," which ridicules the idea of the British constitution, denies its existence, and represents our whole system of government as a villainous combination of folly, imposture, and tyranny?

And finally, why should parliamentary reformers thus countenance principles hostile to the existence of parliament,

There may not be wanting many to whom these laudable and constitutional associations in defence, not only of government, but of every privilege it secures to its subjects, may appear a mere ministerial manœuvre; and there are undoubtedly still greater numbers who apply the *vice versa* argument to the corresponding societies and the opposition. Should it be granted that both those conclusions were just, what would be the consequence but that the opposition were completely foiled at their own weapons.

But to the candid, unprejudiced eye of reason the contest will appear to have been between the
and sanction a work which has since been declared to be a libel by the verdict of an English jury?

This work of Mr. Paine, and the celebrated publication of Mr. Burke, to which it was considered as an answer, form the subject of a tract which I wrote soon after their appearances; but which is still in MS. and may hereafter be printed, if the present essay should be favourably received by the public. I shall, therefore, forbear to say more of them on the present occasion, than that they are both strongly expressive of the characters, the genius, and the principles of their authors; and that they appear to be far better calculated to establish the prejudices and opinions of their respective parties than to alter those of their opponents; more adapted to confirm the perseverance in *error*, than to advance the cause of *TRUTH*.

friends

friends and enemies of the British constitution, who each made their appeal to the sense of the people; and that the victory of government over anarchy was the triumph of liberty.

Be this as it may, the insidious interference of the Jacobin faction with the internal government of this country, which at that time was in a state of neutrality, was a manifest infraction of the laws of nations, an unprovoked and most unjust aggression.

Yet it was not till this faction had usurped the sovereignty of France, under the denomination of a republic, by the constitution of 1792; till it had, by opening the Scheldt, violated the treaty which the British government was bound to maintain; till it had by a *solemn oath* pledged itself to destroy all kings, and banish monarchy from Europe; till it had passed a decree, offering its assistance to the people of all countries in the subversion of their established forms of government, which these universal legislators stiled usurpations inconsistent with liberty, equality, and the rights of man; that Britain reluctantly departed from the system of neutrality she was no longer permitted to maintain.

Com-

Compelled, not only by acts of aggression equally unjust and unprovoked; but by the universal law of self-defence, to ward off the mortal blow which was aimed at her existence as an independent nation by the memorable degree of fraternity of the 19th November, 1792, no alternative was left to the British government but to oppose its operation by force of arms. *See Note, p. 61.*

To the allegation, that the object of the war in which Britain engaged in alliance with the coalesced powers to re-establish monarchy in France was unjust, because France, as an independent nation, had an undoubted right to establish for herself whatever form of government she thought proper, it is sufficient to answer, that France had no right to frame a constitution for herself, the fundamental principle of which was the subversion of all other governments; that she had no right to call in question the justice or legality of those governments on account of their non-conformity to her ideas of liberty and equality.

Had the self-constituted government of France been in every respect, but its disorganising principles, the reverse of what it was, the avowal of those principles, and its open as well as covert attempts

tempts to subvert the British government would not only have justified resistance as a right, but enjoined it as a duty.

It was not the government of England, but of France, that referred to the dreadful decision of arms the momentous question—"Whether the former was to be reduced to the humiliating state of a subordinate republic, or the latter to be again a monarchy?"

And what kind of government was this which Britons were arrogantly commanded to exchange for their own? Was it not the sanguinary constitution of France in 1792, the reign of terror established by regicide, massacres, and perjury, nourished by the plunders of nations, and upheld by the point of the bayonet?

But granting all this, and much more, to be incontrovertible fact; admitting that whole provinces of France preferred death to so abject a slavery, and that those which submitted were either deprived of all power to resist by depopulating requisitions, or deceived by their own enthusiasm, and the hopes of conquest and plunder, did not this government offer to treat with us? Ought not administration to have heard what terms

terms they would propose ? Should they not have received M. Chauvelin as ambassador from the republic of France ?

This leads to the second article of discussion : viz. " To point out the impolicy of receiving " M. Chauvelin in the character of ambassador " from the republic of France, in the beginning " of the year 1793 ; and to vindicate the sincerity of government in the late negotiation for " peace."

The minister on that, as on every subsequent occasion, when the expediency and even necessity of making peace has been insisted on, has uniformly declared his sincere desire " to treat for " peace, on fair and honourable terms, whenever France shall be in possession of a government that is capable of maintaining the accustomed treaties of amity with other nations." This declaration is equally candid and explicit ; nor has there occurred any event since it was made that can in the least degree impeach its sincerity.

But where is the advocate for peace, or the opponent of administration, hardy enough to maintain, that the government which sent Mons. Chauvelin possessed any *one* quality which could render it capable of " maintaining the accus-

"torn treaties of amity with the neighbouring nations?"

Did it not exhibit to the whole world a convincing proof of its *inability* to comply with this necessary preliminary in every prominent, disgusting feature? Did not the only principles to which it endeavoured to adhere, the preservation of its existence, and the extension of its power, alike forbid it to entertain the most distant idea of peace, which must have been inevitably destructive to both? War was its animating principle; rapine and conquest, its vital support.

But though the embassy of M. Chauvelin could not have peace for its real object, it had others less ostensible, but of considerable importance, to accomplish by his mission. By receiving Mons. Chauvelin in the character of an ambassador, the British government would explicitly acknowledge their's. By rejecting the proffered explanation, they would incur the odium of plunging their country into a war which they might have avoided; and, by thus furnishing a plausible argument for their opponents, would increase the number of the disaffected, and strengthen the cause of sedition at home, while the same arguments would produce in France effects greatly advantageous to the Jacobin cause.

But

But had administration adopted the impolitic measure of receiving M. Chauvelin in the character of an ambassador from the French republic (the only one in which he had any power to negotiate), he must, if he had spoken the real sentiments of those he represented, and at the same time adopted their style, have spoken nearly in the following terms:

“ Imagine not, corrupt ministers of a tottering throne, it is to you, or to the tyranny you servilely obey, and fully attempt to perpetuate, that the free and invincible republic of France sends me as ambassador. Think you they will condescend to sue for peace to a —, who deserves to die for presuming to wear a crown? With an aristocracy, whom they detest as the privileged, hereditary plunderers of society? With a P——t, that is the shadow of representation, and the very essence of corruption?— No! Frenchmen will be true to their engagements; that glorious republic, which has sworn eternal hatred and destruction to kings, will fulfil its solemn engagement. The hated government of Britain shall be destroyed; the tricoloured flag shall fly on the Tower of London; and the tree of liberty shall be planted at the gates of St. James's Palace; it shall be

"nourished by the blood of tyrants. It is to you,
 "virtuous Britons, who know how to appreciate,
 "and are alone worthy to receive, that liberty
 "and equality we have established in France,
 "that my embassy is in reality addressed. I offer
 "in one comprehensive word all the blessings
 "France enjoys: I offer you 'Fraternity.'—
 "Peace must of course be the result of the fall of
 "that tyranny you have endured too long; and
 "it only remains for you to determine whether
 "you will form a member of the invincible re-
 "public of France, 'one and indivisible,' or
 "become a republic on the same model, though
 "proportionate to your subordinate rank in the
 "scale of nations."

Equally ridiculous were the sentiments, equally
 insolent the language, not only of the Jacobins,
 but of the Brissotine faction, at the very time
 M. Chauvelin was sent to England as ambassador
 from the republic to treat of peace. But what
 was this republic which the British government
 was required, as a preliminary article, to acknow-
 ledge? Was it the republic of the Brissotines—
 of the Jacobins—or of Robespierre?

No man will be so regardless of truth and rea-
 son as to say it was the republic of France. Bri-
 tain

tain would indeed have proved herself (what she never ought to be) the implacable enemy of France, had she recognised, as a free republic, the usurpation of those sanguinary tyrants, by whom France has been deluded, depopulated, and enslaved. But admitting that *endurance* was *election*; that the convulsive tyranny of contending factions, to which France was, from inability of resistance, reluctantly compelled to submit, was the object of her choice; and, in reality, what it pretended to call itself, a free republic; still it was not a government “capable of maintaining “the accustomed treaties of amity with neighbouring nations;” it possessed not stability to ensure its continuance for a single week—it possessed not integrity to fulfil any engagement, since it was founded on perjury—it had sworn eternal enmity and destruction to kings—and its decree was *unrepealed* when it sent an ambassador to treat for peace with the government it had bound itself to destroy.*

Yet

* What is called by the French government the explanation of this decree, given in their name by M. Chauvelin, in January 1793, when he presented his letters of credence, can only be regarded as an additional proof of their duplicity. These are their words: “We have said, and we desire to “repeat it, that the decree of the 19th November could not “have

Yet had not those insuperable difficulties been opposed to the admission of M. Chauvelin's embassy, could the British government have consented to a *separate* peace with the French republic?

“ have any application, unless to the single case in which the
 “ general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call the French nation to its assistance and
 “ fraternity. Sedition can never be construed into the general
 “ will: these two ideas naturally repel each other, since
 “ a sedition is not, and cannot be, any other than the movement of a small number against the nation at large; and
 “ the movement would cease to be seditious provided all the
 “ members of a society should at once rise, either to correct
 “ their government, or to change its form *in toto*, or for any
 “ other object.” So that, according to this explanation, the decree was not meant to have any operation “ till the general
 “ will of a nation clearly and unequivocally expressed should
 “ call the French nation to its assistance and fraternity; till
 “ all the members of a society should rise at once, &c.” or, in other words, it only offered assistance and fraternity in a case where no assistance could be wanted. “ For when a society
 “ rises at once either to correct its government, or to change
 “ its form *in toto*, or for any other purpose,” it cannot want assistance from other nations, since it is fully competent of itself to effect its purpose.

The decree of the 19th November (thus explained) must undoubtedly be admitted to be at once the most harmless, and the most unmeaning decree that ever was passed—but unfortunately for those countries that have received the “ assistance and fraternity of the French republic,” they have found

lic? Must she not, in that case, have given up her continental treaties, abandoned her allies, *disarmed her navy*, and after having been a tame, inglorious spectator of the conquest of Europe, by the numerous and resistless armies of France, have seen those armies, amounting to more than a million of men, flushed with victory, pouring their overwhelming torrent on the wide-extended, defenceless coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and involving all in universal ruin?

The most disastrous war would undoubtedly be preferable to so infamous, so destructive a peace. It was not till the establishment of the present government in France, by the constitution of 1795, nor till that constitution, by obtaining the confidence of the French nation, had acquired stability capable of maintaining "the accustomed treaties of amity with the neighbouring nations," that a faint, though distant prospect, appeared for the accomplishment of that most desirable event, a general and solid peace. Nor was it till the tide of victory was turned in favour of the Austrians

found them to be a combination of all the evils, and all the injuries, which suffering humanity can sustain, or ruthless tyranny can inflict. So widely in this instance, at least, does practice, illustrated by melancholy and unquestionable facts, vary from principles thus falsely and sophistically explained.

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in Germany, in the last campaign, by the brilliant and glorious exploits of Prince Charles, that any hopes could reasonably be entertained of concluding a general peace.

The restoration of France from a state of barbarism and tyranny, unexampled in the annals of the civilized ages and countries of Europe, to the possession of a consistent, organized form of government, which has afforded many proofs of its regard to justice, morality, humanity, and the public good, which, it is to be hoped, may be in a state of progressive improvement, and which is "capable of maintaining the accustomed treaties of amity with neighbouring nations," coinciding with the happy turn and promising aspect of the Emperor's affairs in Germany, formed a favourable juncture for negotiation.

This opportunity was not neglected by the British government; and though their overtures, by means of Mr. Wickham, did not meet with the desired success, the Directory were at length induced to declare their readiness to accept an "accredited ambassador."

The embassy of Lord Malmesbury was the consequence; and throughout the whole of this

memorable transaction there appears, on the part of the British government, and of their ambassador, a spirit of candour, moderation, and forbearance, which might have produced the most happy consequences to Europe, had the same *conciliatory* disposition influenced the conduct of the Directory.*

But, unhappily, it was so far the reverse, that it appeared as if their only intention in receiving our ambassador was to gain, by so ungenerous a stratagem, the acknowledgement of their government, the ostensible object for which it was pretended they took up arms.

From the day of Lord Malmesbury's arrival in France to that of his quitting it, he experienced from the *people* every possible testimony of respect—from the Directory, a regular, uninterrupted series of insult, arrogance, and mortification. They permitted, if they did not direct, the most scurrilous and indecent reflections on himself, his embassy, and the government he represented, to appear in a daily print,* under their immediate influence, and even in their pay.

* Le Redacteur.

The meanness of disavowing what they thus openly sanctioned, must render them contemptible, not only in the general opinion of the world, but in that of France itself; and at the same time it affords the strongest proof that the duplicity with which they constantly charged the British administration, was clearly imputable to themselves.

Every circumstance attending this negotiation is a proof of their insincerity. The war was undertaken to establish the French republic; it is acknowledged by the embassy itself; all ideas of conquest they have repeatedly reprobated: yet an adjustment of the balance of acquisitions, between Britain and France, arrests the treaty in its progress, and is judged by the Directory a sufficient excuse for its insolent dismissal of the British ambassador, without so much as a hearing. At the very time they pretended to treat with our government for a general peace, they had actually sent an ambassador to the Emperor to treat for a separate peace, and it appeared as if Lord Malmesbury was only detained till General Hoche had delivered his fraternal credentials as ambassador from the Directory to the Irish nation; since his departure from France preceded that of Lord Malmesbury only five days.

Handwritten note: The
 did not Lord M. say that he could
 touch for a separate peace. I do
 not know of it.

The most scandalous and ridiculous commemoration of the anniversary of the murder of Louis the Sixteenth, and the inhuman and impious mockery of swearing eternal hatred to kings, is an additional proof of the insincerity of the Directory in the late negotiation.

The Message of the King to Parliament on the 26th December, and his declaration on the 29th of the same month, equally demonstrate the sincerity of government in the late negotiation, and their anxious desire to renew it.

But till the hostile principles, which, at present, fatally influence the counsels of the government of France be totally abandoned, and explicitly disavowed, this desirable object cannot be accomplished. The dread which the French government entertain of recalling their numerous armies is, perhaps, a much stronger inducement to them to continue the war than their desire of conquest, their antipathy to the British government, or any difficulties, however great, which may attend the settlement of a general peace.

But are there no means to remove this obstacle, and to quiet these apprehensions?

This important question leads to the third and last article intended to be considered in the present discussion.

Viz. 3dly, “ To recommend the immediate
 “ termination of this destructive war by a general
 “ peace, on the basis of compensation, which
 “ has been admitted by the governments, of
 “ Britain and France to be just; and to render
 “ this peace permanent and secure, by a firm
 “ alliance between the French and British nations
 “ and governments.”

As an indispensable preliminary to the accomplishment of this truly great and desirable event, the reciprocal injuries which each of these powerful nations have suffered and inflicted, in their impolitic and ruinous contentions, must be buried in eternal oblivion; the absurd national prejudices and antipathies, which the ambition of their governments, rather than the dispositions of the inhabitants of these rival nations, have industriously propagated, must be abandoned; the hereditary enmity which has subsisted for so many centuries must be forgotten.

Nor is this necessary revolution in popular opinion so difficult as it may at first sight appear.

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The aggregate mass which is called *the people*, whether in France or in England (which are undoubtedly the most enlightened nations in the world) have neither opportunity nor inclination, if they *all* possessed ability, to form just or liberal ideas of the character of other nations; they are therefore always ready and willing to believe what is told them by those whom they know to have more leisure and better means of information than themselves.

Englishmen and Frenchmen have, ever since the Norman conquest, been told they are *natural* enemies. This gross libel on nature they have always considered as an article of their political creed; and have very conscientiously, and willingly, followed their leaders to cut each other's throats, for the glory of their respective kings and countries; and to *revenge* themselves on their "natural enemies," though all the time without any "malice or hatred in their hearts," except what their wise and righteous "governors, teachers, political pastors, and masters," might have found it convenient to instil into them.

If two numerous armies of these natural enemies should even, at this moment, when the national

animosity created by ambition, nursed by prejudice, and strengthened by a long reciprocation of injuries, has attained its highest pitch, be eagerly waiting the dreadful event of battle; and if the meditated slaughter should be suddenly and unexpectedly suspended by the happy tidings of peace, would not the joyful acclamations of either host assert the rights of injured nature? Her children, liberated from the cruel tyranny of human restrictions, and absolved from the stern commands of honour, would obey her awful voice, and embrace as brethren.

A *natural* enemy "is a monster" which the world "ne'er saw," and national animosity is the creature of political delusion.

Should a Frenchman and a Briton be cast on a desolate island, the national prejudice would instantly vanish, and the joy of meeting with an associate in affliction would obliterate for a moment the idea of their mutual distress.

So powerful is the *principle* of UNIVERSAL PHILANTHROPY which the all-wise *Creator* has implanted in the *breast* of *man*, that it exists, and occasionally bursts forth, even in those who have
been

been inured to acts of rapine, violence, and cruelty; who have been *systematically* barbarised.

When the decree was passed in the convention, that the armies of the French Republic "should take no prisoners," a decree which is so super-eminent in atrocity as to cast at an awful distance the vilest acts of deliberate barbarity which history has recorded, the armies of France, to their immortal honour, indignantly refused to obey the infernal mandate.

In the late glorious action, when the Indefatigable and the Amazon, attacked Les Droit De L'Homme, and the two latter, while fighting with equal bravery, ran on shore on the coast of France, the humane and generous natives, respecting the valour of their gallant enemy, by which they saw their own ship destroyed, were equally attentive to the preservation of Englishmen as of their countrymen, from the common calamity to which the fate of war had brought them.*

Are

* The following extract of a letter from the 1st lieutenant of the Amazon to his brother at Plymouth, dated from Audievene, department of Finisterre, Bretagne, 15th Jan. 1797,

Are such heroic, generous nations to be longer considered as *natural* enemies?*

Forbid it, *righteous heaven!* and grant that their fierce, their impolitic, their destructive contention may be immediately succeeded by an alliance as durable, an amity as sincere, as their present hostility is *irrational!*

The French are not, by nature, a cruel or malevolent people; nor are either their national prejudices, or the cruelties or enormities which stain the annals of the sanguinary reign of Robespierre and his associates, to be attributed to the depravity of the people, but to their inverted education, to the examples of turpitude and barbarity continually before their eyes, and to the immoral and *atheistical* principles industriously propagated among them.

1797, proves the generosity with which these gallant men were treated.

"We are treated exceedingly well, and scarcely feel ourselves as prisoners; we go either to Quimper or Brest to-morrow, and expect to be exchanged shortly."

STAR, 18th Feb. 1797.

* Mr. Burke's Letters on a Regicide Peace.

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The legislators of 1792 affected to form their constitution by the model of the Roman Republic, and they produced a copy which had nothing in common with the august original but its defects, a copy "that was at once resemblance and disgrace."

The insatiable lust of empire, the avidity of plunder, the uncontrollable excesses of military licentiousness, the proscriptions, the dictatorship, which tarnish the lustre of the Roman Republic, were all exceeded in that of France; while the happy mixture of * monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, for which their government has been justly admired; its fidelity to engagements; its reverence for piety, temperance, frugality, chastity, and all the moral and social duties which constitute the felicity and true glory of a nation, or a government, are strongly and fatally contrasted by the principles and manners which the Jacobin system established in France.

They were not ignorant that equality of station is incompatible with society, that subordination is inseparable from government, that virtue and order are essential to the enjoyment of liberty,

* The consular dignity was the representative of monarchy.

and that vice and licentiousness infallibly destroy it; but they were equally certain, that the confusion and anarchy their system would produce must terminate in the tyranny they laboured to establish, though it did not occur to them that power, so basely obtained, must necessarily be transient and insecure.

Earnestly it is to be hoped, that their principles may not survive their government and their crimes; since the present legislators of France have, in the construction of their constitution, proved that they possess ability and inclination to avoid the errors of their predecessors.

This legislature has a graduated, consistent, durable form; the glaring absurdities of natural equality of rank (for even in a state of nature there is no other absolute equality) being preserved in civil society, and the establishing a revolutionary * constitution, are now wisely exploded.

They appear to be convinced of the instability of tyranny, the necessity of subordination, the in-

* A revolutionary constitution, a *floating stability*! this is a manifest political bull: as consistently might we speak of repulsive attraction, luminous darkness, or any other assemblage of contradictory qualities.

dispensable obligations of morality, the beauty of virtue, and the value of liberty.

If they thus persevere in their endeavours to merit the esteem, to reform the basely vitiated manners, to restore the moral sense, and to perpetuate the felicity of the truly great and respectable nation, who have delegated to them the sacred trust of governing, they will not only obtain, but deserve their confidence.

Nor will Britain and France, nations so nearly approximated in situation, in government, in genius, in arts, in arms, be much longer divided in interests or affection. The increasing light of reason and philosophy will surely dispel the mist of error, pride, and ambition, which have so long concealed from them their true interest. It will admonish them, that, far from being natural enemies, they are natural allies.

So long ago as May, 1792, M. Chauvelin, in his note to Mr. Grenville, says, "France already looks on England as her natural ally,"*

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* See Mr. Erskine's View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War.

There is no reason to doubt that the unfortunate king, and the government M. Chauvelin *then* represented, were convinced of the truth of this assertion; but that king and that government were, long before the time in which he made it, destined to destruction.

Happy would it have been for England, for France, and for Europe, if this alliance had then been formed, and the constitution of 1789 been established.

It was not till the writer of this essay had proceeded thus far, that he saw an extract of Mr. Erskine's "View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War;" but, highly as he honours the character, and readily as he acknowledges the superiority of the eminent abilities of Mr. Erskine, he cannot give up the exercise of his reason, and the conviction of his mind, to any authority, however respectable. He may probably be mistaken, but he is not disingenuous or insincere. He respectfully submits to the candid judgment of the impartial public the arguments he has ventured to lay before them, and the facts he has adduced. If the former are unfounded, or the latter misrepresented, they are not intentionally wrong; he will be thankful to be better informed; he is open to conviction, submissive to just reproof, and ready to acknowledge mistakes, and to retract errors. The cause he has engaged in *he believes* to be the cause of *truth*; but he is too well convinced of the fallibility of human reason to place implicit confidence in the rectitude of his own.

But

But the welfare of France, or the repose of Europe, were of little moment to an unprincipled faction, who looked on war as the only means to maintain their power, and had sworn the destruction of monarchy in other countries, that they might perpetuate tyranny in their own.

No nations have so little to gain, or so much to lose by a war with each other, as Britain and France. The extensive foreign possessions of the British empire are all exposed to the uncertain attacks of an enterprising enemy, and must be defended by an expence of men and money for which their intrinsic worth is by no means an equivalent; while our commerce is impaired by continual depredations, and taxed with high premiums of insurance; while we risk the still greater mischief of being involved in a continental war, ever attended with a profuse, consumptive, waste of blood and treasure; never compensated with advantage; and seldom gratified with dear bought victory, or flattered with empty fame.

Nor are these the only evils which Britain has sustained and must endure, or dread, while in a state of competition with France.

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The history of the present century proves both countries have passed the whole of it in a state little better than that of actual hostility; and if the latter is to Britain a rapid consumption, the former is a gradual decline. Our intervals of peace, though remissions of

“The dire disease which must subdue at length,”

have never placed us in a state of convalescence; our foreign possessions we have always been obliged to keep in a respectable state of defence; our navy, the great bulwark of the British isles, the glory of our empire, the sovereign of the sea, has been, and must still continue to be maintained, even in time of peace, in a state of such respectability and augmentation, as to be always prepared for war, while we have a rival to oppose who envies its glory, and dreads its irresistible power.

To these continual and increasing drains of national wealth, from which even peace cannot exempt us, are to be added the still more burdensome accumulation of debt and taxes which every war entails on our country, and which neither the most rigid economy (rendered still more difficult even by the causes which require its

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exertion), nor the most extensive commerce, can alleviate, unless attended with a long interval of peace, which nothing but an alliance, a sincere, *permanent* alliance with France, can give us reason to expect.

Should it be asked whether there is no mean between alliance and hostility with France, I refer to the history of both countries since the conquest, and of the last sixty years in particular, for an answer.

It has been during this whole period a state of open or concealed enmity, of declared or premeditated war. And from what causes have the occasional eruptions of these dreadful political volcanos of Europe arisen, but from the pride, ambition, injustice, violence, and impolicy, which have reciprocally actuated the councils of England and France?

The ostensible causes of these wars are impeachments of the common sense; the real ones, of the integrity and humanity of mankind.

What did France gain by the destructive war in the reign of William III. and the successive war,
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in which Europe was so long, and so dangerously to her liberty; involved by the mad and wicked ambition of Louis XIV. She saw that ambition foiled, and the independence of Europe preserved, by the military genius, activity, perseverance, and undaunted fortitude of our truly illustrious William III. And though our splendid victories in the succeeding reign were obscured by the inglorious treaty of Utrecht, France gained by this victory nothing but the feeble alliance of Spain, the source of future wars. But the pride of her monarch, humbled by so many defeats by land and sea, was gratified; England was disappointed in the object of the grand alliance; and this was esteemed a full compensation for the losses and disgrace France had sustained by the war.

In all the succeeding wars, even to the present moment, it is evident that France and England have, by preferring *war* to *peace*, sacrificed their *true* and permanent *interests*, merely to indulge the impolitic and malevolent desire of *injuring each other*.

However superior France may be to Britain in the population and contiguity of her territories, she

she has not at any time more to hope, or less to suffer and to dread from war, than Britain.

Though invasion can effect little but partial, wanton, unavailing mischief in either country, while the people are well-affected to their respective governments, the menace of it keeps the threatened country in a continual state of expensive preparation and anxious alarm. France, from the decided inferiority of its navy, has always more difficulty to encounter, either in resisting or attempting an invasion, than Britain. In the late attempt on Ireland, nothing but the extraordinary good fortune of the French fleet, including the superior force of the British, saved the whole armament from capture or destruction; and if this escape encourages any future attempts, they will have still greater difficulties to surmount.

Their continental wars have always been more injurious to them than to Britain, hurtful and expensive as she has ever found them to be.

It was justly said by the late illustrious Earl of Chatham, who exalted to its highest pitch the glory of Britain, that "America was conquered

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in Germany :”—and what Germany was to France, Gibraltar is to Spain.

By the unparalleled success of the British arms in that glorious war, which ended in the peace of Paris in 1763, we dispossessed the French of Canada, and thus prepared the way for the independence of the American States. This event, facilitated by the impolitic interference of France, necessarily produced a change in the opinions of the French nation, which gave birth to the constitution of 1789.

This appeared to be the auspicious era in which the ancient impolitic animosity between France and England might have been succeeded by a firm and durable alliance. Too near in situation, too equal in power, to regard each other with the apathy of neutrality, they must have a common or an opposite interest; they must be in union or hostility; they must be faithful allies or inveterate enemies. Surely the hard-earned experience of *eight centuries* might admonish them that their true interest consists in *union*.

The headlong precipice before them might warn them both of the inevitable destruction that awaits

awaits them, if they pursue their desperate course. What avail the splendid victories of France in Italy, or the no less signal triumphs of Britain in either India, or on the ocean, if they oppose increasing obstacles to that peace on which their national existence depends? They cannot subdue, though they may destroy, each other. The powers which now sit as calm, secure spectators of their mortal conflict, may crush them while they thus "render the faint quittance" of exhausted vigour, and their fatal conquest will "crumble from their expiring grasp."

At such a crisis, are the parade, the etiquette, of ministers and the Directory; are Belgium, are the French West India islands, depopulated by war, by pestilence, and by the still more dreadful scourge of Jacobin liberty; are the Cape of Good Hope and Trincomale to be put in competition with the national salvation of Britain and of France?

Are causes so comparatively trivial to prevent that alliance on which their safety depends?

The present is not a war for conquest, or for glory; not a war of nations nor of governments, but of opinions; and if a spirit of *mutual conciliation* could subdue the pertinacity with which these opinions have been fatally retain-

ed, the respective claims arising from reciprocal conquests might admit a fair and liberal discussion.

The alliance of Britain with France would not only preserve them from destruction, but afford them mutual, inestimable, and permanent benefits; their foreign possessions, no longer considered as objects of ambitious contention, or employed as engines of hostile annoyance, would become sources of mutual prosperity; the repose of Europe would be secure from interruption; Britain would obtain that relaxation from war, and the government of France that stability and support, from our powerful protection, which is so essentially necessary to their existence.

Even now, in danger of momentary destruction from the convulsions of contending factions, nothing can avert it on the return of peace, and the recal of their numerous armies, but the support that government must previously assure itself of obtaining from alliance; and no ally can so effectually afford it as Britain.

Neither the government (or, if the phrase is more agreeable to those who are anxious to take *a spell* at the national helm, the administration) of
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this country, nor the *present* government of France, were the authors of the war, but that usurped tyrannical government, now execrated in France itself, whose existence will only be remembered by its crimes.

The late overture made by administration for peace was declared (and might, however unreasonably, be believed) by the Directory of France, to be insincere; yet neither that belief, wholly unsupported by evidence, nor that pretended inadmissibility of the terms proposed, could justify the ignominious dismissal of the British ambassador. His Majesty's message to Parliament, and the declaration of the 29th December, expressly testify his readiness to receive any future overtures on the part of the Directory; the sincerity of the British government in the late unsuccessful negotiation, and their anxious desire to terminate a war in which they were compelled by inevitable necessity to engage, or treacherously and pusillanimously to surrender the constitution and the independence of the British nation.

This is the light in which the great majority, not only in Parliament, but of the people, view the conduct of administration; and the voice of
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the people must on this, as it should on every great political question, ultimately decide.

But however opinions may vary respecting the origin of the war, which is *now* a question rather of speculative curiosity, or of party interest, than of national importance, its *continuance* can only be ascribed to the impolitic aversion of the French government to peace.

After having allowed compensation to be the equitable basis of the negotiation, on what principle could they reject the terms proposed by the British government, as being inadmissible?

By refusing to restore Belgium, or even to enter on any discussion respecting its restitution, they withheld the *only* compensation which Britain required for the conquests she offered to restore. The indemnification of the Emperor, by the cession of provinces in Italy and its vicinity, could be *no compensation* for Britain, while Belgium was to remain a conquered province of France, to the manifest and very material detriment of Britain—to the obstruction of her commerce in peace—to the hazard of her safety in war. But the restitution of Belgium, it was pretended, was "*inadmissible*," because, being declared to consti-

tute a part of the "republic of France; one and indivisible," the Directory could not treat respecting its restitution. Equally reasonable would it be for the British legislature to pass an act, that the Cape of Good Hope, or Hispaniola, should be considered as an inseparable part of the British empire; and for administration to assert, that any proposals on the part of France for their restitution was inadmissible; and, instead of referring the proposal to the supreme legislature, always competent to repeal its own acts, to break off the negotiation, and ignominiously to dismiss the ambassador who should propose it.

Should it be alledged, that the cases are not parallel, because the incorporation of Belgium with the French republic was the act of the *Belgic people*, and therefore cannot be repealed by the Government of France; it may justly be answered, that the resolutions of municipalities and corporate bodies, extorted by the terror of an irresistible armed force, and the menace of exorbitant fines and arbitrary requisitions, can only be regarded as the act of a free people by those who consider the Jacobin usurpation to be a free government; who call robbery "fraternity," oppression "liberty," and poverty "equality."

But whatever the sentiments of the people of Belgium may be respecting the treatment they have received from the government of France, *that* people are alone competent to decide; and the Directory, instead of imperiously telling them and the whole world, that they must, from henceforth, be indissolubly *chained* to the French republic, should have left the election of their future governors, or the choice of masters, to themselves. It is their unalienable right, and they *will*, sooner or latter, assert it.

If it may be as allowable to hope, as it is rational and benevolent, sincerely to wish, that a spirit of *conciliation*, of amity, and mutual confidence, may succeed to that of hostility, aversion, and distrust, and may actuate alike the nations, the governors, and the councils of Britain and France; the absolute independence of Belgium and Holland, would at once remove the *pretended* obstructions to peace; and an alliance may be formed, which would insure the triumph of liberty, the repose of the world, the admiration and applause of succeeding ages and the *favour of heaven*.

A P P E N D I X.

HAD an opportunity been afforded me of perusing Mr. Erskine's "View of the Causes and Consequences of the Present War with France," previous to the publication of the foregoing pages, I certainly should have noticed, with particular attention, many passages in that justly celebrated and elaborate pamphlet, which differ from, and others which remarkably coincide with, the opinions I have ventured to submit to the public.

But having already traversed nearly the same ground, though, I freely acknowledge, *haud passibus equis*, my present remarks will be chiefly confined to that part of the "View" which attempts to prove the insincerity of the British government in the late negotiation, from the supposed inadmissibility of the terms on which they offered to treat for peace.

Sensible

Sensible as I am that the voice of an obscure individual can add nothing to the fame of Mr. Erskine, I cannot deprive myself of the satisfaction I feel, in thus publicly testifying my sincere respect for his eminent abilities, and estimable character, my unfeigned veneration of that spirit of candour, moderation, and philanthropy, equally conspicuous in his present work, as in all his professional exertions.

But an inviolable regard to what appears to me to be the cause of truth and reason, compels me to differ from him, *totò cælo*, respecting the imputation of insincerity in the late negotiation; nor will this difference, I trust, be imputed to arrogance or vanity, when it is remembered that on this subject, men of the highest abilities maintain opposite opinions; and that it is a subject in the investigation of which, every individual in the community is deeply interested.

Referring to my pamphlet* for the arguments I have adduced, in evidence of the sincerity of the British government in Lord Malmesbury's negotiation, and the *admissibility* of the terms pro-

* P. 65 to 68, and p. 85 to the end.

posed,

posed, it now remains to consider the reasons given by Mr. Erskine in support of the contrary opinion.

Mr. Erskine, in the commencement of his arguments on this subject, at page 93, says, "This answer [to Mr. Wickham], like the late one to Lord Malmesbury, set up the French constitution *as a bar to the cession of any part of the territory of the republic, but in other respects inviting negotiation.*"

He adds, with a most laudable spirit of candour, "Now I am not at all about to *justify* this pretension of France; far less the reason of it, which I consider to be perfectly frivolous, and unworthy of a great and enlightened nation, in its communication with another." This concession is no less manly than just; but it does not follow that this absurd pretension of the French government is "more favourable to negotiation than if they had refused the cession on the ground of national safety," when applied to Lord Malmesbury's negotiation; even if it were admitted that it might have done so, in case a further discussion had been allowed, "which might well have shewn it to have been no reason at all," for this plain reason, because they, in the most peremptory and repulsive manner,

manner, refused to enter into any discussion whatever, which might have for its object the disjunction of Belgium from France.

The reason assigned by the Directory for the inadmissibility of the retrocession of Belgium, *proposed* by the British government, equally applied to *any other* of the territories acquired by France. Their answer was, "That they would listen to no
 " proposal contrary to the constitution, to the
 " laws, and to the treaties, which bind the republic. Thus setting up the French constitution
 " as an absolute bar to the cession of any part of
 " the territory of the republic."

Can there possibly be a stronger instance of duplicity than the conduct of the Directory in this instance affords? The Directory itself admits the principle of compensation, in the following clear and explicit terms :

" But to avoid all farther pretext of discussion
 " on the subject, the Executive Directory now
 " makes the positive declaration of such acknowledgment; and Lord Malmesbury is again
 " invited to designate, without delay, and expressly, the objects of reciprocal compensation
 " which he has to propose."

That

That is, "we first declare we will not, and we
 " cannot, part with any acquisition we have
 " made, because it is contrary to the consti-
 " tution of our republic; and we then repeat to
 " you that we are willing to treat on the basis of
 " reciprocal compensation, which necessarily im-
 " plies, that we must give up something, and de-
 " sire you would tell us what you expect."

Is it not evident to every man of common un-
 derstanding, that the first of these propositions is
 absolutely subversive of the last; and that their
 determination to adhere to it necessarily precluded
 them from treating on any terms of compensation,
 justly stiled by Mr. Erskine "the basis of every
 possible peace." View, P. 98.

This reason assigned by the government of
 France for rejecting the *sine qua non* of the British
 government, must have applied with equal force,
 against the cession of the most inconsiderable town
 in Belgium.

The war, therefore, is continued at this moment,
 not in consequence of the *sine qua non* of Great
 Britain, which is the *disjunction* of Belgium from
 the French republic, but clearly upon the reason
 given

given why that *sine qua non* is resisted. See View, p. 107.

The particular motives which might induce Britain to demand, or France to resist, the separation of Belgium, in preference to any other part of her acquisitions, are totally distinct from the principle on which the rejection of the negotiation by the French government was founded.

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ye
The charge of insincerity, the failure of the negotiation, and the awful responsibility of continuing this most destructive and impolitic war, rests not on the government of Britain, but on that of France, which pretended to admit, as the basis of a treaty, that principle of reciprocal compensation it declared itself not only unwilling, but *unable* to act upon; and refused to enter into any discussion respecting Belgium, though such a measure, "conducted in the * spirit of peace, " and on principles purely pacific," not only might, but most probably would, have led to the most happy termination.

The British government, even to the last moment of the negotiation, manifested an anxious

* See "View," P. 117. Quotation from Mr. Burke.

desire to prevent its being broken off; for it is worthy of remark, that the *ultimatum*, so far from precluding, *invited* discussion. It did not demand, as a *sine qua non*, the *retrocession* of Belgium to the Emperor, which France might have represented as being dangerous to her republic, but merely its *disjunction* from that republic, which might, not only in the estimation of government, but in that of the British nation itself, be considered as essentially necessary to their existence as an independent people.

When Lord Malmesbury, in the last conference with M. Delacroix, said to him, "if France
 " could, in a *contre projet*, point out a practicable
 " and eligible modification, still keeping in view
 " that the Netherlands must not be French, or
 " likely again to fall into the hands of France,
 " such a proposal might *certainly* have been
 " taken into consideration," he evidently prepared the way for the *opening* of the negotiation; The *addition* to the *sine qua non*, "that Belgium
 " should not again be likely to fall into the
 " hands of France," was not the least obstruction to the treaty, but a necessary condition, resulting from the *sine qua non*; for if the security of Britain required the *disjunction* of Belgium from France, it could not admit of their *reunion*.

But it by no means precluded discussion, since the absolute independence of Belgium offers for deliberation a *medius terminus*, which might probably have been made the foundation not only of a treaty, but of an alliance.

From the remark, that whilst “ this system of “ policy (alluding to the *sine qua non*) remains in “ force, there is no hope that France, *feeling a “ sense of security*, will relax from demands which “ a natural anxiety for security has suggested,”* it would appear to be Mr. Erskine’s opinion, that the possession of Belgium is as essential to the interest and security of France, as its disunion from that country evidently is to England; though it might not be difficult to prove, that it is of *far* greater importance, especially as it respects her *commerce*, to the latter. But, admitting the importance of obtaining or resisting the *sine qua non* to be equal, what does it prove, but that the British government was bound by motives equally cogent not to retract from its demand.

The argument may possibly appear more clear and forcible by adopting a mode of illustration

* View, p. 110.

similar to that of Mr. Erskine, but more nearly resembling the manners of the present time.

“ Let us assimilate (says he, “ View,” p. 111.),
 “ a contest with a nation composed of men, to a
 “ quarrel with an individual man, in so rude a
 “ state of society as that there should be no cer-
 “ tain law to give a rule for both. The analogy
 “ is a close one, because nations have no com-
 “ mon superior.” See “ Conciliation,” p. 30
 and 31.

Preserving this analogy, let it be supposed that France and England are represented by two neighbouring country squires, A. and B. as absolutely independent on each other as Tyrrell and Faulkland in Mr. Godwin’s “ Caleb Williams.”

Having exhausted and impoverished themselves by litigious but unavailing contention, in which *reciprocal* injuries had been inflicted and received, B. demands of A. whether he will admit his steward, if he should send him, to compromise their differences. To this A. consents, and the steward of B. accordingly comes to his house.

On being asked by the steward of A. in what manner his master proposes the business should

be settled, he replies, " It is my master's opinion
 " that something must be given up on each
 " sides." This proposal is immediately consent-
 ed to.

" Well then," says the steward of B. " you
 " know my master has got several of your estates
 " from you by the expensive *law-suit* which was
 " lately determined in his favour, which you have
 " little chance of getting back, and you have
 " nothing to give him in return, nor does he
 " require any thing of you for himself; on the
 " contrary, he will give you those estates again,
 " provided you are willing to restore to his friend,
 " neighbour C., that little bit of an estate that
 " you got from him; or, at least, that you will
 " give it to the tenants, as you know it is only
 " parted from my master's by a little brook, and
 " his tenants have no other way of getting their
 " stock to market but through this same estate;
 " beside, I know, if your master keeps it, we
 " shall always be wrangling, and upon any quarrel
 " he will be sending his men to kill my master's
 " game, and destroy his fences, and therefore
 " my master cannot sleep in peace, nor think of
 " making it up with him, if he *will* keep this
 " estate."

" A very

“ A very pretty story this,” replies the steward of A. “ And so, because *your* master has
 “ deprived mine of his property, mine is to
 “ give up what he came *honestly* by, to satisfy
 “ his whims. I thought you had known my
 “ master better : he is not such a fool as to give
 “ up *any thing* he once gets hold on. Besides,
 “ he *cannot* do it if he would, because he has
 “ made a law for himself not to do it, and I hope
 “ you are not quite so wicked as to suppose he
 “ would break it.

“ Not only so ; but my master is very fond of
 “ this little estate, and he does not see any occasion
 “ for your master’s tenants to carry their stock
 “ through it, or to go to market at all. He is
 “ a very good landlord too, I can tell you ; for no
 “ sooner had he got this estate than he resolved
 “ to make his new tenants happy, for they were
 “ quite tired of their old landlord, though, I
 “ believe, they did not know for what reason.
 “ So my master made them all *free*, and *raised*
 “ all their rents, and took care to have *bailiffs* to
 “ collect them ; cut down all the timber on the
 “ estate, drove away their stock to the manor-
 “ farm, and got their sons enlisted for soldiers.
 “ In short, you cannot think how *happy* he has
 “ made them.

“ Another

“ Another thing I can tell you, as a *secret* ; my
“ master plays deep, and is over head and ears in
“ debt ; so he has *morgaged* this estate, and can-
“ not part from it without overburdening the
“ manor-farm : and it is certainly right that
“ these new tenants, and their children’s children,
“ should be ‘ hewers of wood, and drawers of
“ ‘ water,’ for the *manor-farm*, which my master
“ occupies himself, because it was by the means
“ of that, they got their liberty.]

“ All this, however, is only *between ourselves* ;
“ for my master ordered me to tell you, he would
“ not agree to your master’s terms, *because he*
“ *would not*, which he said was reason sufficient ;
“ and added, that if you did not quit his house
“ instantly, and make the best of your way
“ home, he would have you foused in the horse-
“ pond.”

It is not for me to determine whether the foregoing assimilation, or that stated by Mr. Erskine, bears the nearest resemblance to the truth ; but it is with peculiar satisfaction that I turn from those objects in his “ View,” which appear to me in a different light, to others which present themselves

selves to us both in the same colours, and through the same medium.

With authority so respectable, and discrimination so accurate, it must be really accounted by every man of plain common sense (which is the utmost of my pretensions) a misfortune, when the still more respectable authority of his reason obliges him to disagree; and a peculiar *satisfaction* when he finds its *previous* deductions most remarkably to coincide.

How firmly do the following eloquent and convincing quotations, which my limits will only permit me to *select* from a number of passages, equally apposite, rivet in my mind the irrefragable truth of the opinions. I conceived it a duty I owed my country to inculcate in the foregoing pamphlet! How forcibly do they recommend that spirit of moderation, of benevolence, of conciliation, without which no permanent or beneficial peace can be made between Britain and France! How evidently do they point to that sincere, that firm, that *immediate* alliance between both countries, of which every event, every day, every *hour*, proclaims the *absolute and reciprocal necessity*, with the "VOICE OF THUNDER!"

The

The relation of France "to England can never
 " be indifferent. She must always be a *most*
 " *desirable ally*, or a most formidable enemy.* If
 " we were truly friends, upon liberal principles,
 " war must for a century be banished from the
 " earth; if we continue at variance, from con-
 " temptible prejudices, it must be drowned in
 " blood."—View, p. 125.

" Without peace, and peace on a permanent
 " basis, this nation, with all the trade which the
 " world will furnish, cannot support her establish-
 " ment, and must pass through bankruptcy into
 " the jaws of revolution."—p. 125.

" That an honourable peace might, *even now*,
 " be obtained, if rationally and honestly pursued,
 " every succeeding account establishes and con-
 " firms. Proceedings now provoke the indigna-
 " tion of the enlightened part of that nation
 " (France), which, not long ago, would have been
 " a signal for enthusiastic approbation. What
 " was formerly a savage festival is now scarcely
 " endured as a political commemoration."—
 View, p. 126.

Even during the short period which has elapsed
 since the above quotation was written, the benevo-

* See Conciliation, p. 82.

lent spirit of returning humanity pervades and expands the hearts of our enlightened *brethren*—for *such* they are, however alienated by prejudice, or infuriated by passion.

No longer the dupes of insidious hypocrites, or the slaves of democratic tyranny, the French nation is obedient to the voice of reason. The very latest accounts from France announce the indignant refusal of the people to swear everlasting hatred to kings; their softened hearts recoil at the horrid blasphemy of invoking the all-merciful Parent of the universe to attest and sanction the eternal enmity of man to man!

May this glorious effort to destroy so disgraceful a monument of a system originating in tyranny, cruelty, impiety, and folly, be the harbinger of an universal spirit of conciliation! a spirit which may pervade the hearts and councils of *all* the contending powers; a spirit which may admonish them that a continuance of war is incompatible with their political existence; and, “that peace is not best sought through the
 “medium of war, or hunted through the labyrinth
 “of endless negotiation; but is to be sought in
 “the spirit of peace, and laid in principles purely
 “pacific.” *View*, p. 120, quotation from Mr. Burke.

It is this spirit *alone* which can establish between England and France that sincere and permanent peace which the present alarming situation of both countries equally requires.

Firmly connected by this "bond of peace," and founded on a reciprocity of interest, of moderation, of forgiveness, and of amity, an alliance, equally beneficial for England and France might, by the collective wisdom of those acknowledged and eminent talents which many distinguished individuals in the legislature of both countries possess, be permanently established, which would not only rescue them from impending destruction, but establish them in permanent prosperity.

An alliance resting on the solid basis of justice and humanity, and "banishing war from the "earth," would continually enlarge the circle of its active beneficence till it embrace "the whole "world of man."—View, p. 120. "All this is "in the hands of Providence, yet now, EVEN "now, I should confide in the prevailing virtue "and efficacious operation of LENITY, though "working in darkness and in chaos."—View, p. 121, quotation from Mr. Burke.

The innumerable provocations, the accumulated wrongs, the multiplying calamities, and even the *brilliant victories*, which England and France have experienced in their indecisive exterminating hostility, equally conspire to warn them from the further pursuits of their unjust, impolitic, impracticable attempt. All point to *union*, not competition; to alliance, not hostility.—Justice, interest, humanity, command a reconciliation immediate and sincere: and what is there but resentment, prejudice, and pride, to oppose it?*

* It may be objected, that so extraordinary an event as the transition of these two great and powerful nations, from a state of inveterate hostility to that of confederated amity, may alarm the fears and excite the jealousy of the other European governments; and thus generate, instead of preventing, future wars. It is certain that no measure of human policy can be free from the imperfection of our nature; that all must therefore be liable to objection, and subject to contingency; and that the utmost effort of that very limited portion of wisdom or foresight, with which it has pleased the Almighty Governor of the universe to endow the fallible beings which inhabit this very minute portion of the stupendous system, is to adopt such measures of political conduct as may appear, from the admonition of history, and the instruction of experience, to have the strongest tendency to promote the welfare, and secure the repose of mankind. Should this be considered as too *general* an answer, it may be farther observed, that the proposed alliance, having for its object the establishment of national prosperity by the maintenance of general tranquillity, it would be for the interest of every subordinate government to co-

Such obstacles cannot be accounted insupportable in the estimation of the most enlightened nations on earth; nor could the different claims and concessions consequent on a peace, founded on an union of interest, be a matter of difficult discussion to those whose station and abilities assign them this important office.

“ I look less to the terms, which I foresee will
“ raise the difficulties, and which besides may

operate with measures that would evidently promote its welfare, and which (if they had a contrary tendency) the collected force of them all could not prevent. But may not Great Britain, by engaging in an alliance which would oblige her to support the existing government of France, be unnecessarily contracting an engagement which may involve her in a continuance of war, even by the very means she adopts to prevent it? The return of general peace to Europe may possibly be the commencement of civil war in France, and will it not be more political for this country to wait the event and join with the *strongest* faction, than to throw her weight into the scale of a government which may repay her with ingratitude?

Leaving the discussion of this momentous question to those who are in every respect better qualified, and who ultimately will decide, I shall only remark, that it would be *generous* and liberal to support the present government of France, if it manifests a disposition to treat with us on generous and liberal terms; and that by such powerful support, she would probably triumph over every effort of faction.

“ be smoothed and rounded by the spirit of
 “ CONCILIATION, than I look to the *future effects*
 “ which that spirit would produce to the *solidity*
 “ of the peace which would be fostered under its
 “ wings; to the return of that good will, and
 “ the liberal confidence between nations, by
 “ which the prosperity of each, strikes down fresh
 “ roots to the prosperity of all. Depend upon it,
 “ where peace is preserved, and its true spirit
 “ cultivated, the world is large enough for all the
 “ nations which compose it. As they multiply
 “ in numbers, and increase in arts and improve-
 “ ments, traffic only becomes more extensive and
 “ complicated; and traffic amongst nations is
 “ like traffic amongst individuals; he who has
 “ the greatest capital, and the best situation for
 “ trade, starts with an advantage which only
 “ imprudence can destroy. This is still the situ-
 “ ation of Great Britain.”—*View*, p. 123.

How strongly do these sentiments, expressed in
 the eloquent simplicity, and luminous perspicuity,
 of Mr. Erskine's style, coincide with, and cor-
 roborate, those principles of conciliation and
 benevolence which it has been the endeavour and
sole object of my far inferior abilities to impress, as
 salutary and important truths, on the public
 mind!

With

With much greater cause for humility, and with the most sincere respect for Mr. Erskine, I trust, I may without apprehension or danger of offending him, convey my concluding sentiments to the public on this occasion, nearly in his own unassuming expressions.

“ It is not for a *very* private man like me,
 “ with no talents for a statesman (and occupied,
 “ not only with a constant series of official employment, but with the duties and cares inseparable from the ardent desire to provide for
 “ the present support and future establishment of a
 “ numerous family) to comprehend, in my view,
 “ the detailed interests of Great Britain as they
 “ intersect (or unite with) the interests of France.
 “ But this I will say distinctly, that I would not
 “ accept the completest knowledge of all of
 “ them, nor the highest station to bring them
 “ into action, unless I was conscious of possessing,
 “ at the same time, the principles and the temper
 “ of turning them to the benefit of my country.”

THE END.

ERRATA.

- Page 5, line 12, for *passion* read *poison*.
- 15, — 1, for *To* read *to*, and insert a comma after *war*, in last line, page 14.
- 19, — 18, for *money* read *mercy*.
- 21, — 18, after *victims* add *was to torment them*.
- 23, — 8, for *were* read *was*.
- 25, — 3, for *profesi* read *possess*.
- 30, — 1, for *of* read *to*.
- 31, — 19, dele *the*.
- 56, — 14 and 15, for *massacre* and *plunder* read *massacres* and *plunders*.
- 59, — 11, for *fully* read *basely*.
- 1b. — 16 and 18, for *With* read *To*.
- 60, — 3, dele comma after *receive*.
- 67, — 4, for *is an additional proof* read *are additional proofs*.
- 71, — 12, for *droit* read *droits*.
- 72, The reference placed at line 2 should be at the words *inverted education*, line 14.
- 79, last line, for *successive war* read *succession war*.
- 83, for *conquest* read *conquests*.
- 85, for *that* read *the*.

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